

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EB-11 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10

L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-07 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-03 SS-20

USIA-15 DOTE-00 DRC-01 SCCT-02 /114 W

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R 290724Z MAY 74

FM AMCONSUL FRANKFURT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7249

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

UNCLAS FRANKFURT 3359

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, GW

SUBJECT: VIOLENCE MARKS NEW FRANKFURT TRANSIT SYSTEM

1. SUMMARY: ALTHOUGH JUSOS AND OTHER LEFT-WING SPD AND DGB GROUPS HAVE RELUCTANTLY ACCEPTED FAIT ACCOMPLI OF FARE INCREASES INVOLVED IN NEW GREATER FRANKFURT TRANSIT SYSTEM, RADICAL DEMONSTRATORS BLOCKED STREETS IN CITY CENTER MAY 27 AND WERE EVACUATED ONLY AFTER PITCHED BATTLE WITH POLICE. END SUMMARY.

2. GREATER FRANKFURT PUBLIC TRANSIT SYSTEM, INVOLVING SUBSTANTIAL FARE INCREASES, CAME INTO EFFECT MAY 26 BY AGREEMENT BETWEEN CITY ADMINISTRATION AND FEDERAL RAILWAYS. LEFTISTS, INCLUDING LARGE GROUPS IN FRANKFURT SPD AND DGB, WHO FAVOR FREE PUBLIC TRANSPORT, HAVE CAMPAGNED FOR MONTHS AGAINST NEW SYSTEM, ESPECIALLY FARE INCREASES. FRED GEBHARDT, LEADER OF LEFT WING OF FRANKFURT SPD, LED OPPOSITION BUT SWITCHED TO SUPPORT AFTER HE BECAME CHAIRMAN OF FRANKFURT SPD EARLY THIS YEAR. SPECIAL DELEGATES CONVENTION OF FRANKFURT SPD LAST WEEK VOTED FOR NEW SYSTEM BY FAIRLY NARROW MARGIN.

3. DGB-SPONSORED PROTEST DEMONSTRATION LAST WEEK WAS UNCLASSIFIED

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ATTENDED BY MORE STUDENTS THAN WORKERS. PLANNED

FOUR-DAY TEACH-IN AT ADULT EDUCATION CENTER (OF WHICH GEBHARDT IS DIRECTOR) WAS CANCELLED AFTER TWO DAYS FOR LACK OF PARTICIPATION. JUSOS ANNOUNCED ON WEEKEND THAT, IN VIEW OF FRANKFURT SPD DECISION AND DISAPPOINTING RESPONSE TO DGB RALLY, THEY WERE DROPPING ACTIVE PARTICIPATION IN PROTEST MOVEMENT.

4. NEVERTHELESS, NEARLY FOUR THOUSAND DEMONSTRATORS BLOCKED MAIN SHPPONG STREET AND OTHER STRATEGIC POINTS IN CITY CENTER MAY 27, FIRST WORKING DAY OF NEW TRAM SYSTEM, AND BROUGHT TRAFFIC TO STANDSTILL FOR THREE HOURS BEFORE POLICE MOVED IN IN FORCE WITH USUAL WATER CANNONS, TEAR GAS, ETC. STREETS FINALLY CLEARED AFTER STRUGGLE LASTING OVER TWO HOURS. TOLL: 39 DEMONSTRATORS ARRESTED AND UNKNOWN NUMBER INJURED. DEMONSTRATION SPONSORED BY COUNCIL OF OCCUPIED HOUSES, KOMMUNISTISCHE BUND WESTDEUTSCHLAND (KBW), AND AD HOC RADICAL QUOTE COMMITTEE AGAINST FARE INCREASE UNQUOTE.

5. COMMENT: WE BELIEVE THIS FIRST TIME IN RECENT YEARS THAT JUSOS AND OTHER ULTRA-LEFT ELEMENTS OF FRANKFURT SPD HAVE NOT REPEAT NOT BEEN OUTWARDLY INVOLVED IN MAJOR STREET DEMONSTRATION. INCIDENT THUS SERVES USEFUL PURPOSE IN SHOWING THAT THERE IS DIVIDING LINE BETWEEN SPD LEFTISTS AND VIOLENCE-PRONE FRINGE GROUPS EVEN FARTHER TO LEFT. SIZE OF DEMONSTRATION, EVEN WITHOUT QUOTE RESPECTABLE UNQUOTE SPONSORSHIP, IS DISQUIETING, BUT EXTENT OF FARE INCREASE(2/3, PLUS NEW RESTRICTIONS ON USE OF TICKETS,ETC.) HAS AROUSED WIDESPREAD HOSTILITY.HARLAN

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